

CAMP + TRANS

★ 2001 ★

\$1, please

Welcome to Camp TRANS!

Hi and welcome to our zine. To attempt to narrow down every Camp Trans member's notion about what this introduction should say would be an impossible task. Lots of people ask us, "What exactly do you want?" Well, we'd all like to be safe in the places we want to be in. And those of us that want to be at MWMF should be able to go if they want to, and be there without fear of violence or harassment. We think that folks should be able to do that. And some people don't want to be involved with Fest, and are at Camp Trans to experience the all-inclusive, hopefully more safe, accepting and welcoming party politics that we hope to create this year. Oh, and the whole "not allowed to go in" part, due to gender identification, "sex at birth," lack of \$300 dollars if you're over 16 to spend in the forests, or a whole other range of things.

We may have different ideas and opinions about what Camp Trans is all about, but we are definitely here to spread awareness about the trans-phobic "womyn-born-womyn only" policy of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. There will workshops, discussions, music, food ALL FOR FREE, to spread the word about why we're here. And we want to start new dialogues about trans-inclusion and identity, and maybe the beginnings of starting a whole new festival, away from MWMF. We are inviting the decision-makers of the Fest to come talk with us. We would like to go to where you are and discuss, but you won't let us in. This makes negotiations quite difficult.

So for the brief history of Camp Trans - in 1994 or so, one transwoman (whose name we really shouldn't be using without her permission) got kicked out of the fest when she was outed to security. So the year after, friends of hers started Camp Trans in protest of this. Other folks picked up the call in 1999 and have continued it in the years since. Last year, about 10 of us were kicked out when we came out as a motley crew of non womyn-born-womyn folks to the security guards after buying tickets one sunny Saturday afternoon. We did this for several reasons. Some of the people that got kicked off were female-born-males (FTM), and were removed for being "men." Therefore, transitioning to the "other" gender is possible. So, if a "woman" can become a "man," then a "man" can become a "woman," which should allow her to enter the fest. Also, this proves that one of us may look enough like a "woman" to easily buy a ticket, and roam about the land in the closet about our trans identity without any trouble. Not to mention the other MTF, girlfags, boydykes, intersexed, and genderqueers amongst us. But once we come out, we are all of a sudden a danger to the very fabric of the festival. Don't Ask, Don't Tell in full effect.

So transfolks, both female-to-male (FTM) and male-to-female (MTF), as well as many other genderqueer people, can't talk about their trans identity. Imagine substituting the word "trans" with Lesbian, or Latina, or differently abled. What if You couldn't come out at the Fest? Would you feel safe there?

Everyone's welcome to leave the Fest and come hang out with us, to stay or go back, to perform, to ask questions, or share some food. By all means come see the shows and participate in the Candlelight Vigil in remembrance of victims of anti-trans violence. The next pages will be filled with the art, words and ideas of Camp Trans participants and friends. Please take time to read what we have to say, and come say hi across the road.

Simon and Casey (*the fabulous T-boy cousins*), July 30, 11pm Logan Square Chicago



Tiger Boy

What is a Tiger Boy>

Tough Guy? Huh? (punch)

Tiger Boy is a purr with claws
stored underneath

a Tiger Boy can eat you alive
can undress you slowly with his eyes
and what sharp teeth he has

how gentle, falling into male pattern balding
cliches.

A Tiger Boy can be in flight
and drown simultaneously
eating seaweed, spitting sunflower seeds
at your murderous gender codes

Tiger Boys is a brick
thrown through another condo window
cemented to other shapeless bricks
building strong walls, stone walls
inclusion exclusion House of Perversion
La-dee-dah

An honest Tiger Boy will let you in
but give away the key in fear of accusation

Tiger Boys can suffocate one another
and theorize ourselves into oblivion
Thankfully, Tiger Boys have art.
Our puppets will close ranks around us
our masks will protect us
while we are all under construction
seagulls diving for flesh in the grey ocean
Soon this Tiger Boy will have his fill
manicured hair to tender Achilles' tendon
I will be sufficient
incomplete and enough
And then, by the hundreds,
Tiger Boys will slide into leather jackets
straighten their ties
burn their shoes
and infiltrate the cities and seas.

-simon strikeback

Transsexual/Faggot/Pinocchio

Dear Papa Gepetto,
I fear my time has come -
for I have visited a Thousand fairies
and not a one -
not a Single one has made me a Real Boy
Love,
Your Wooden Son
Wait! -you say
and -Liar!
Eyes leveling to my nose:
But, you made me, Papa
and Nothing ever grows
You sewed this cap and trousers
(I rest wooden in these clothes)
And even in the dark belly of a whale
Who would ever know?
Yet still
-a Million fairies
and nothing ever grows.
Nothing FUCKING grows.
Could I ever be a dead Boy?
But wooden, yes,
A hollow one
Would death then come so easy

To this shell of One-
Could I end my quest for Realness
With a toy, a wooden gun?
But even here, in my delusion
it is loneliness that's won
With only two hands
to play the parts of:
father, son, gun.
Max Spit

fidobootlick@hotmail.com



Photo
by:
de

CAMP+TRANS

It's that time of year again. The land is once again being prepared for, wise and wonderful womyn from all over the world have turned their eyes toward Michigan, and Camp trans once again rises from obscurity to sit at the front gate, a terribly uninvited guest.

And once again, I have to consider my own mixed feelings about Camp Trans and my role in it. My partner has just rented a van and warned me that it's time to buy me "an air mattress", which doesn't sound like the sort of thing that will make sleeping on the ground any different from, well, sleeping on the ground.

I think I first heard about Camp Trans back when I was just beginning my transition, what I sometimes call "my transexual journey". I was, I think, quite scared and insecure. I had no idea what was in store of me, and I wasn't looking forward to the world's reaction to me Coming Out.

But when I learned of Camp Trans, it seemed to me to be an inspiring thing. Here were transpeople standing up for themselves, and at the undeclared Capital of modern radical feminism. What a terrific place to start! Surely, a little work, and the Womyn of the festival would understand and embrace their "prodigal sisters". It seemed to me altogether a good thing.

A few years later, I found myself at Camp Trans. Of course, it's one thing to have an opinion from far away, and quite another thing to actually take part. As a Camp Trans participant, I no longer had the option of glossing over the details of what was going on, I had to really think about some of the more complex issues involved.

Lets face it - Camp Trans is a bit of activism meant to get a group of Womyn

- awesome Womyn - to stop doing something they have every right to do. I want to be clear on that point, I approve of Womyn only Spaces. I affirm the right of Womyn - or anyone - to create their own groups, to take control of their environments, and to define their own identities. And that means accepting their right to define me as something other than how I define myself, and to create trans-free spaces, and to kick me (and people like me) out of them. That's important, because the ability to self-define, to create safe spaces, these are not just important, they are absolutely vital, they are privileges we need to take for ourselves and us if we are going to grow and prosper. These truths, and seeing the pain and discomfort that CT causes for many first hand makes me nervous about taking part. I have no wish to attack Michigan. I have no wish to question the right of people to withdraw from society for a week and live in a world of their own design. I do not wish to force another womyn to adjust her own identity to make room for me. And so every year after CT I say "Good work, glad I came, but never again." That's certainly what I said last year when we climbed into our van and headed home. But life is complicated wherever you go. This year, a friend of mine with was desperate for a support group that could help her deal with her history of abuse - we could find only one group that would take the specific issue on - but it was at the local Womyn's Center - my friend was not quite "woman" enough to be allowed in their front door. Today, months later, she is still looking. This year, we discovered that our local SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) program does nothing to prepare Nurse for the possibility that some women who

are sexually assaulted will be trans. Can you imagine being brought to the ER after a sexual assault, and having your assigned Nurse get up in disgust and horror and walk away? It really happens here. The program turns out to be run by good feminists who still have no idea what we are trying to tell them.

Perhaps they're the same ones who turn homeless transwomen away from our local shelter system. Just go away and die.

The nasty fact is, most transpeople face discrimination, dehumanization, and violence every day - in that context, any sign that says "No trannies" makes me very, very nervous. And why does my identity have to be a challenge for anyone else's? It sounds terribly "Defense of marriage act" that way, doesn't it?

I think that making Safe Spaces is important, I think that making Exclusive Spaces is a very powerful thing to do. But power has responsibility, too.

When you pick up a scalpel and begin surgery, you have a responsibility to be careful what you cut. When you create an Exclusionary space, you have responsibilities to think about what you are doing, and how you do it, and why, and to dialogue about that with the communities in and outside of your space. Exclusionary Spaces are Very Easily misused, and it is incumbent on us to act carefully.

And so I'll be at Camp Trans this year. I may feel a bit uncomfortable about it, but I can't walk away. Because I think the scalpel has cut too deep.

Because I th

ink that my local Womyn's center, the SANE program, Michfest, and all of us, would benefit if we could find ways to make room for all kinds of womyn.

-by STACEY



UNTITLED Band W photo
RUTH OPPENHEIM - ROTTSCHILD
2001.



untitled b'n photo. ruth openheim - rothschild. 2001.

ASHES to ASHES

(12)

And so you said that maybe I could sleep.

At least to kill the cravings for coffee and cigarettes.

But I said, with a smile, that even my dreams were stained in nicotine...

(Some yet to be borne of my growing dependence on insomnia as an excuse.)

And I laughed, at your jokes that grew more and more frequent at the

Urgency of my shaking hands and quivering lip...

The early signs of decay.

The ashtray was my home in you.

I said it once with reverence, touching your hair.

You kissed away my breath...

I think it was then that there was no longer "we."

The day us died.

And we became our-selves.

Lonely and having to pretend sometimes,

That my blanket might be your arm:

Just for Tonight.

But you were there: in the world outside.

With plurals sounding foreign on your tongue,

Leaving me shrouded in the mystery of 'heroin chic',

The past of another girl (to be forgotten).

And I wait for sleep.

-sara

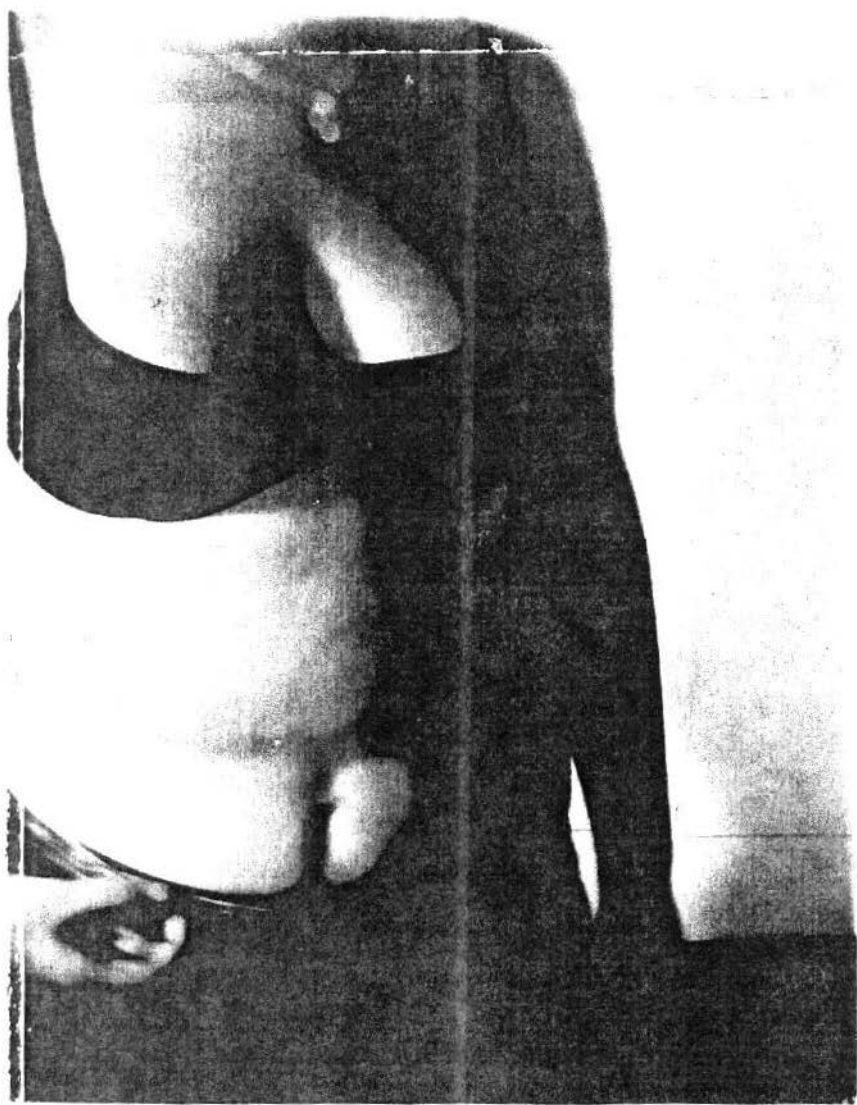


photo by brenna

I'm in love with Katie. My love for her is both new, sparkly clean and comfortably worn in with trust and stories; shiny red excitement at noon and sleepy blue flannel at 1 am. Together we make a nest of leathers with our arms where I lay and rub my knuckles together, adjusting my glasses as I paint us cornflower blue with a long brush, curling into sadness with a grin and reaching as deep into her smiling face as my armless eyes can go.

Holding hands in the park, Katie and I watch children playing on the tire swing. It's a warm day, some of the younger children are naked or wearing very little clothing. We watch them and talk about taking our kid to the park, when we have a kid together some day. A lot of our friends have been supportive when we tell them of our plans to be mommies together. Some people get really excited, others just look confused.

I told my younger brother that Katie and I are in love. He said, "That's so great!" When I told him that we might have kids together, he said "Don't you think that would be hard for a kid to grow up with two moms?" And I said "Why, just because we're both girls?" and he said "Yeah, because the kid would just get teased all the time, and probably make no friends." I didn't even know what to say.

A close friend of mine tells me she hates penises. To her, penises always symbolize greed, oppression and general yuckiness. She calls herself a gold-star dyke, never been with a man and never plans to be. "They always get everything they want," she says, talking about penises. "They're everywhere. I just want them all to go away." I told her that Katie and I are in love. She just looks at me, inhales a 10 second drag off her cigarette, and says "Well, I didn't know how to say "It doesn't necessarily matter what we have in our pants. We could both be gold star dykes too for all you know."

I told my mom that Katie and I are in love. We were walking in the woods one day. I was talking about moving to Portland with Katie. "Mom," I said, "I'm really in love with Katie," and she said "Well I kind of figured that out. I'm so happy for you. But I also feel so strange, I mean, with Kat being trans and everything... I just really don't know how to act about it," and I

said, "Well, it's really not that big of a deal. We're just two girls in love. Act just the way you would around any of my friends," and my mom said "Yeah, but I mean... At least if you're in a lesbian relationship, you could have a normal lesbian relationship." I wanted to ask her what a "normal lesbian relationship" would be like.

I told all of my house mates that I'm in love with Katie. One day she called on the phone. Scott came to get me and said "The phone is for you." And I said "Is it Kat?" and he said "No, it's some boy." I picked up the phone and she said "Hi!" and I wondered if she'd heard anything he said. "Hi, Kat," I said, smiling.

Most of my close friends have asked the same, boring questions. "So, what is sex like?" "Wait, does that mean that she used to be a girl, or she used to be a boy?" "Has she had surgery?" "What does she look like?" "What is her real name?" "What do her parents think of her?"

Sometimes when I'm alone I watch my knees, or the TV, or the town I'm in and I try to think long and hard about the utopia of love and the dilemma of everyone else. All the stuff they say about us, it matters. I know it matters, because its our identities, our selves and our bodies that people talk about and question all the time. Sometimes they tell us we're cool, sometimes they threaten to hurt us or kill us, nothing shocking. It will probably always be this way.

I'm in love with Katie. I don't really need to prove to the world that she's ok and I'm ok and we're normal dykes or we will be good mommies or we love each other enough for this fuss to be worth it. I just want to steal you roses from downtown, and laugh and laugh and laugh. And get your tears and other wetness all over our clothes. I still remember everything they say about us, especially all the stuff we never hear them say.

But sometimes, like right now, I'm really not listening. I hear the sound of your voice on the phone, the voice I will never mistake for anyone other than the girl that I love. I feel the ache of memory when I run my hand along your back as you sleep and pull the sheets over us, up to our necks, and wrap myself around you. When you open your eyes, I will already be awake, running my finger nail along your arm between the soft, brown hairs, thinking of baby names and bus rides and everything that has brought us together. Can you feel this? The history of our eyes, our skins, our names. Here in our hands is where hope and change grow. With my brushes and my voice, I paint it on the outside to show the world our love is true.

↑ BY ELENA



↑ photo by BRENNAN



unhappy butch

happy playful painful

cheerful

(searching)

too loud too radical too smart to be femme/too fat too scared.
butch or not butch? i am not butch. femme is not in my
vocabulary/lipstick lesbian i am not. always called a tomboy
i don't even know what that means but it isn't me. shaved head
hairy legs too loud too strong.

(finding)

1940s 1950s nurturing healing cleaning fucking i want to be your
and you have a name. femme/a name/i want i want to touch to
hold to be. but to be without community? i have a dichotomy to
learn from/hold me and i will be femme. teach me with your
opposite i learn my self through yours hold the door for me
i'll try not to fight. lipstick smeared razor cuts on new legs,
new thighs i am finding under layers of gender lies.

femme. by ruth oppenheim-rothschild.

tender

former

latter

(being)

i cook for you/i fuck on the bottom i vacuum in stilettos
and an apron/i am loud i am radical i am smart i am fat i am
strong i am radical this is gender this is queer this is femme
i tease i sew buttons on your pants i play dress-up at three a.m.
i sing i fight i scream i am. too radical too smart too fat too
strong too femme. named.

pronoun theory.

i question the accuracy and necessity of gender-specific pronouns in communication. if someone's gender is identified and communicated through other signifiers as they choose, and we are sensitive enough to other people's gender identities to pay attention to the gender they wish to be perceived as, are "accurate" male and female pronouns needed? we need something to break up the awkwardness of pronounless speech (*sam went to the store. sam got some plums in aisle one and sam got spinach in aisle two. sam waited in line to pay. then sam went home.*), but do pronouns truly need to match up to the appropriate gender?

i advocate destroying gendered pronouns altogether. *sam went to the store. he got some plums in aisle one and she got spinach in aisle two. he waited in line to pay. then she went home.* it takes no meaning out of what is being communicated, nor does it invalidate the gender identity of the subject. for people whose gender identities have been consistently disregarded or misunderstood by others, i realize that the idea of being referred to with pronouns that don't match their genders could feel somewhat negative. it is necessary that we are *actively* conscious of the pronouns we use to reference others, not making assumptions about anyone's gender identity/pronoun preference *and* consciously changing our speech patterns once we are aware of someone's preference. i am speaking idealistically, because it isn't fair to ask anyone to give up their gendered pronouns until they feel their gender is truly recognized, but it is something to consider.

i find bigendered/nongendered pronouns (s/he, hir, et cetera) to be clumsy and limiting. though they might be recognized within small parts of the queer community, they are not understood by most people, and thus cut off a great deal of needed communication about trans identity and politics with those who have no base understanding of the issues involved. i don't feel like they create a solution in or out of the queer community.

if we can teach ourselves to validate people's genders by honestly validating them, rather than simply shifting our language for the sake of politeness, gendered pronouns would not longer be a valid or necessary means of communicating or limiting gender. (ruth oppenheim-rothschild.)





Photo by*
dee

Boy

Though half asleep I notice the bed rise as you
disentangle your body from mine.

Blinking open my eyes I squint through my hair to
try to find you.

Your naked body poised in front of the mirror,
you run your hands down over your chest,
down over your almost not there hips to your
thighs -

your hands framing your cunt.

You shift nervously.

You don't see what you feel,

you don't feel what you see.

Glaring at your self in the mirror you push your
hands hard into your chest,

Maybe if you push hard enough they'll disappear,
maybe if you push hard enough you'll disappear.

Sitting now you slowly bind your chest,

Relaxing as your breasts flatten and disappear.

You look yourself up and down in the mirror.

Donning first shirt then sweater you look at
yourself with a critical eye -

Boy?

Rip off the sweater add a tie step back -

Boy?

A look of recognition.

Pants!

You need pants.

As you scramble for your clothes I struggle to suppress my laughter.

Dare I let you know what I saw?

Can I tell you that I saw you let your guard down when you began to feel like who you really are?

Can I tell you that you've always been my boy, soft and sweet?

Can I tell you how you turn me on

Can I tell you that when your body rocked above mine I felt you ride me, felt your dick and held on?

I wanted to call you sir,

I wanted to fall to my knees and beg to blow you.

I wanted to make you beg for more.

I wanted to be your grrl.

But since I declared i could not, would not be your femme, you called me butch.

I closed my eyes and waited. By Katie (aka Scout)

voices drown me
in the forcefulness
of their accusations
making me choose
to be who i
will not
who i cannot be
i am not like them
i am neither her
nor there
i exist somewhere
in the middle
or perhaps they
like to put me in
a dark corner
and tell themselves
i don't exist
that everybody
is on or the other
boy or girl
pick one
they tell me
as i wrap the
darkness around me

because i cannot

i will not

choose

i am neither

yet i am both.

BY AARON

I hear the disappointment in your voice

I feel it every time you touch me

so soft as though you will never touch me again

you say you love me

you hold me as though you will never hold me again

you kiss me like it's the last time

but it's not me you are touching

not me you are loving

not me you are holding

not me you are kissing

you go through the formalities

of using the correct pronouns

calling me by the right name

but it's just emptiness

just air

it means nothing

you want her

and I'm not her.

BY AARON

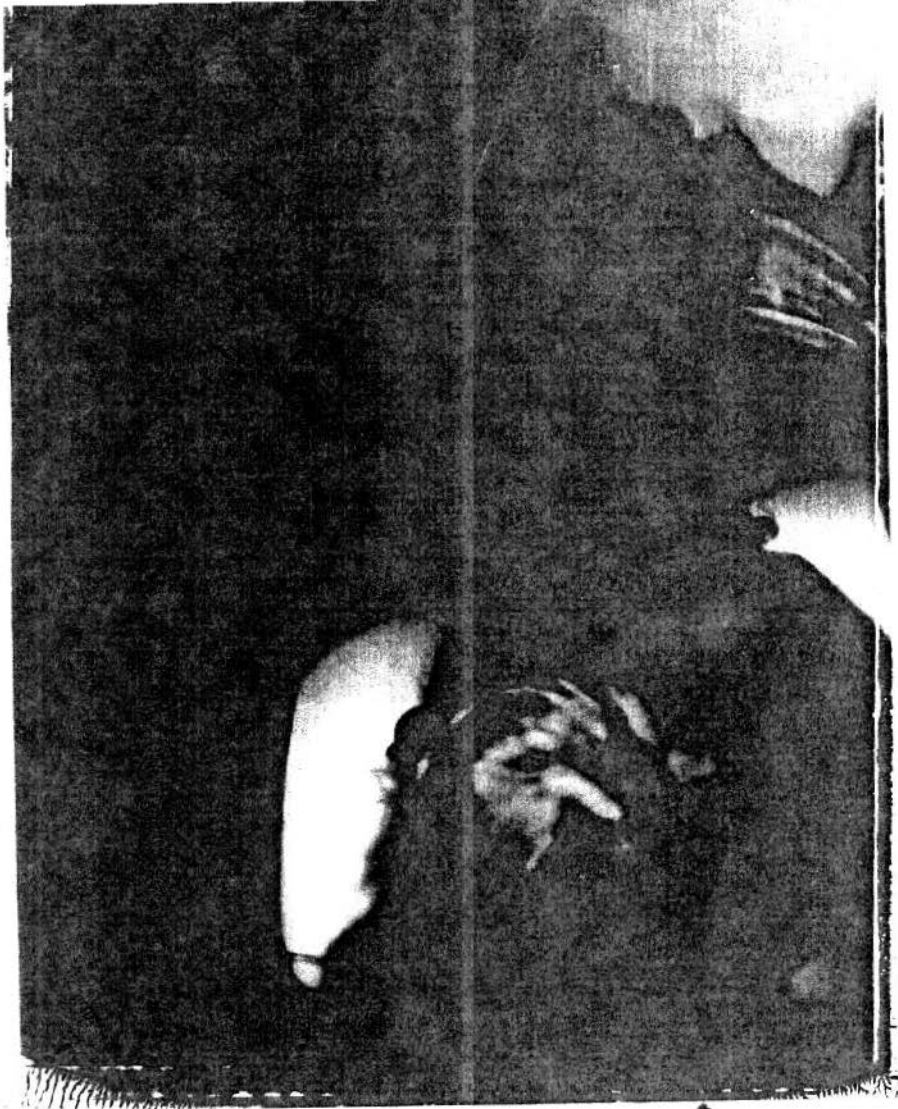


photo by brenna



MWMF Fact Sheet

[http://www.
butchdykeboy.com](http://www.butchdykeboy.com)

[http://www.
camptrans.com](http://www.camptrans.com)

[camptrans@
strap-on.org](mailto:camptrans@strap-on.org)

A few things you may not know about the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival:

1) The "womyn-born-womyn only" policy was created about 15 years ago in response to pressure from trans people and their allies. There are TONS of trans people that attend the festival every year, but risk being thrown out if they "reveal" their identity.

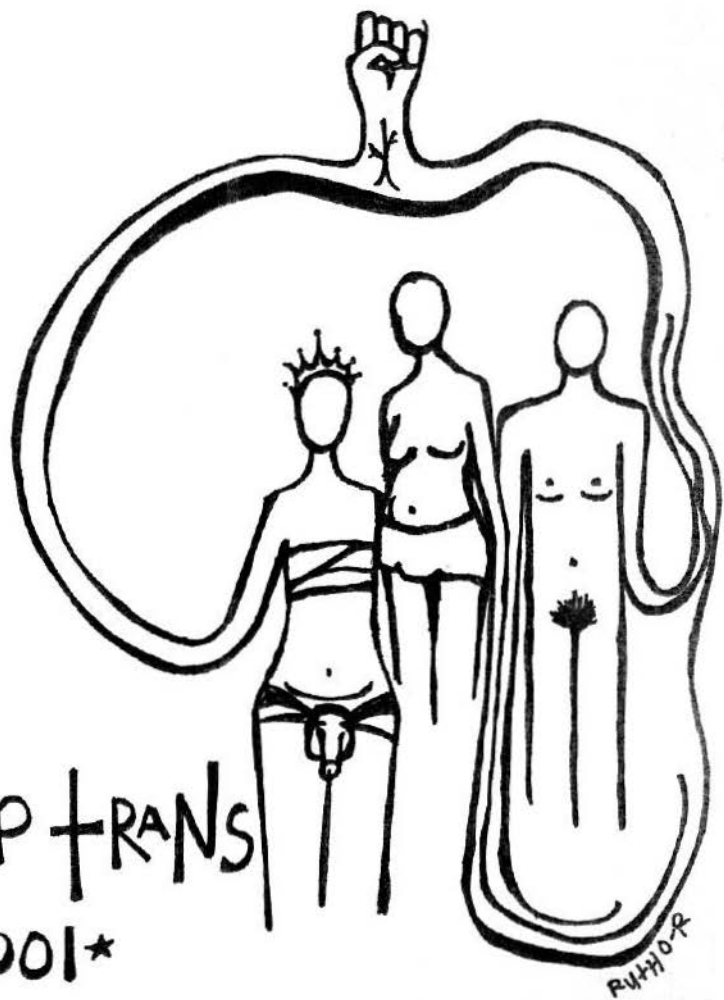
2) Because of the high costs and segregationist policies of MWMF, many women including mothers, women of color, folks who practice BDSM and working class and poor women do not or cannot attend.

3) The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival is a FOR PROFIT INSTITUTION. **The sole owner is Lisa Vogel.** This information was found out by simply calling the MWMF phone line. No matter how many people want change, it is her final decision. At MWMF, MONEY TALKS! *How much do you think it costs to put on the fest? Where does the rest go?*

THANKS, +Hanks, and more thanks to:

simon strikeback, dee, ruth, mckay, casey
margaret, josh, anne, Kate, jeff, gnat, eli, linda, mæx,
rachael, gunner, stacey, all the boston kids, all the rockin'
contributors, everyone who showed up to CT, and everyone
else who helped out along the way.





CAMP + TRANS

2001*

RUTHOR

THURSDAY:

(AUG. 9TH)

9pm - open mic

FRIDAY:

(AUG 10TH)



2pm - TRANSFEMINISM (stacey and Katie/scout)

3pm - size issues, GENDER issues (ruth and brenna)

4pm - GENDERFUCK DRESSUP (ruth and margaret)

10pm - VIGIL (on the land-mainstage area)

11ish - DRAG SHOW and DANCE PARTY

SATURDAY:

(AUG 11TH)

2pm - FEMME WORKSHOP (ruth, mckay, margaret)

3pm - INDIE MEDIA (simon, mckay, ruth)

4pm - WOMEN ONLY SPACE - is it REALLY a safe space?
(gunner and the boston lesbian avengers)

5pm - WHAT else is Fucked up ABOUT Michigan? (simon)

8pm - Music (emily white, three cheers for becky, stardeth, scott free)

SUNDAY:

clean up!